What is claimed is:

1.   A method for distributing and collecting information for an electronic workbook that includes a plurality of worksheets, the method comprising:

assigning a contributor to a worksheet of the workbook by associating with the worksheet identifying information for the contributor;

associating with the worksheet distribution information for distributing the worksheet; and

distributing the worksheet to the assigned contributor based on the identifying information and the distribution information.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein associating with the worksheet identifying information for the contributor comprises embedding the identifying information in the worksheet.

3.   The method of claim 2 wherein embedding identifying information in the worksheet comprises storing one or more name-value pairs within the worksheet.

4.   The method of claim 3 wherein storing one or more name-value pairs within the worksheet comprises storing a name-value pair having the contributor's name.

5.   The method of claim 4 wherein storing one or more name-value pairs within the worksheet further includes storing an email address for the contributor.

6.   The method of claim 1 wherein associating with the worksheet distribution information for distributing the worksheet comprises storing one or more name-value pairs within the workbook.

7.   The method of claim 6 wherein storing one or more name-value pairs within the workbook comprises storing in the workbook one or more name-value pairs that include one or more of a distributor's name, a distributor's email address, a

distributor's reply email address, special instructions, a master workbook name, a master workbook date, a due back date, information regarding how the workbook will be distributed and distribution status.

8.   The method of claim 6 wherein storing one or more name-value pairs within the worksheet comprises storing a name-value pair having the distributor's name and information identifying a medium for distributing the worksheet.

9.   The method of claim 1 further comprising packaging the worksheet to restrict viewing of the worksheet to the assigned contributor before distributing the worksheet to the assigned contributor.

10.   The method of claim 1 further comprising encrypting the worksheet before distributing the worksheet to the assigned contributor.

11.   The method of claim 1 wherein associating with the worksheet distribution information for distributing the worksheet includes associating with the worksheet information for receiving returned contributions to the worksheet.

12.   The method of claim 11 wherein associating with the worksheet information for receiving returned contributions to the worksheet includes embedding information in the returned contribution for receiving the returned contribution.

13.   The method of claim 12 wherein embedding information in the returned contribution includes storing one or more name-value pairs within the returned contribution.

14.   The method of claim 13 wherein storing one or more name-value pairs within a returned contribution includes storing in the contribution one or more name-value pairs that include one or more of a contributor replied date, a contributor reply key, a contributor returned date, and information regarding how the contribution was returned.

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15. The method of claim 11 further comprising collecting a returned contribution to the worksheet and associating the returned contribution with the workbook.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein collecting the returned contribution includes using the information embedded in the returned contribution to associate the contribution with the workbook.

17. The method of claim 15 further comprising decrypting the contribution.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein collecting an assigned contributor's contribution includes automatically reading the distributor's email inbox to identify email messages that include returned contributions to a worksheet.

19. The method of claim 15 further comprising selectively merging the associated contribution with the workbook to create a merged workbook.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein selectively merging the associated contribution with the workbook to create a merged workbook includes making a temporary copy of the merged workbook.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising saving the temporary copy of the merged workbook as a new workbook.

22. A system for collecting and distributing information for an electronic workbook that includes a plurality of worksheets, the system comprising:

a storage device for storing the electronic workbook; and

a processor programmed to work in cooperation with the storage device to:

assign a contributor to a worksheet of the workbook by associating with the worksheet identifying information for the contributor;

associate with the worksheet distribution information for distributing

the worksheet; and

distribute the worksheet to the assigned contributor based on the identifying information and the distribution information.

23. The system of claim 1 wherein the processor programmed to associate with the worksheet identifying information for the contributor is programmed to embed the identifying information in the worksheet.

24. The system of claim 23 the processor programmed to embed identifying information in the worksheet is programmed to store one or more name-value pairs within the worksheet.

25. The system of claim 24 wherein the processor programmed to store one or more name-value pairs within the worksheet is programmed to store a name-value pair having the contributor's name.

26. The system of claim 25 wherein the processor programmed to store a name-value pair having the contributor's name is programmed to store an email address for the contributor.

27. The system of claim 22 wherein the processor programmed to associate with the worksheet distribution information for distributing the worksheet is programmed to store one or more name-value pairs within the workbook.

28. The system of claim 27 wherein the processor programmed to store one or more name-value pairs within the workbook is programmed to store in the workbook one or more name-value pairs that include one or more of a distributor's name, a distributor's email address, a distributor's reply email address, special instructions, a master workbook name, a master workbook date, a due back date, information regarding how the workbook will be distributed and distribution status.

29. The system of claim 27 wherein the processor programmed to store

one or more name-value pairs within the workbook is programmed to store a name-value pair having the distributor's name and information identifying a medium for distributing the worksheet.

30.   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is further programmed to package the worksheet to restrict viewing of the worksheet to the assigned contributor before distributing the worksheet to the assigned contributor.

31.   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor is further programmed to encrypt the worksheet before distributing the worksheet to the assigned contributor.

32.   The system of claim 22 wherein the processor programmed to associate with the worksheet distribution information for distributing the worksheet is programmed to associate with the worksheet information for collecting returned contributions to the worksheet.

33.   The system of claim 32 wherein the processor programmed to associate with the worksheet information for collecting returned contributions to the worksheet is programmed to read embedded information in a returned contribution for receiving the returned contribution.

34.   The system of claim 33 wherein the processor programmed to read embedded information in the returned contribution is programmed to read one or more name-value pairs stored within the returned contribution.

35.   The system of claim 34 wherein the one or more name-value pairs stored within the returned contribution include one or more of a contributor replied date, a contributor reply key, a contributor returned date, and information regarding how the contribution was returned.

36.   The system of claim 32 wherein the processor is further programmed to collect a returned contribution to the worksheet and associate the returned

contribution with the workbook.

37. The system of claim 36 wherein the processor programmed to collect a returned contribution to the worksheet and associate the returned contribution with the workbook is programmed to use the information embedded in the returned contribution to associate the contribution with the workbook.

38. The system of claim 36 wherein the processor is programmed to decrypt the contribution.

39. The system of claim 36 wherein the processor programmed to collect a returned contribution is programmed to automatically read the distributor's email inbox to identify email messages that include returned contributions to a worksheet.

40. The system of claim 36 wherein the processor is further programmed to selectively merge the associated contribution with the workbook to create a merged workbook.

41. The system of claim 40 wherein the processor programmed to selectively merge the associated contribution with the workbook to create a merged workbook is programmed to make a temporary copy of the merged workbook.

42. The system of claim 41 wherein the processor programmed to make a temporary copy of the merged workbook is further programmed to save the temporary copy of the merged workbook as a new workbook.

43. An electronic workbook comprising at least one worksheet, the worksheet including embedded information for assigning a contributor to the worksheet.

44. The electronic workbook of claim 43 wherein the embedded information in the worksheet includes one or more name-value pairs stored in the workbook.

45.   The electronic workbook of claim 44 wherein the one or more name-value pairs stored within the workbook include a name-value pair including the contributor's name.

46.   The electronic workbook of claim 45 wherein the name-value pair including the contributor's name also includes an email address for the contributor.

47.   An electronic workbook comprising at least one worksheet, the workbook including embedded information for distributing the workbook.

48.   The electronic workbook of claim 47 wherein the embedded information comprises one or more name-value pairs stored within the workbook.

49.   The electronic workbook of claim 48 wherein the one or more name-value pairs stored within the workbook include one or more of a distributor's name, a distributor's email address, a distributor's reply email address, special instructions, a master workbook name, a master workbook date, a due back date, information regarding how the workbook will be distributed and distribution status.

50.   The electronic workbook of claim 47 wherein the embedded information for distributing the workbook includes information for receiving returned contributions to the worksheet.

51.   A contribution to an electronic workbook having at least one worksheet, the contribution including embedded information for returning the contribution to a distributor of the workbook.

52.   The contribution of claim 51 wherein the embedded information includes one or more name-value pairs stored within the contribution.

53.   The contribution of claim 52 wherein the one or more name-value pairs include one or more of a contributor replied date, a contributor reply key, a contributor returned date, and information regarding how the contribution will be

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returned.

54.   An electronic workbook comprising at least one worksheet, the worksheet including embedded information for distributing the workbook and collecting contributions to the workbook, the workbook having stored therein one or more name-value pairs that include one or more of an assigned contributor's name, an email address for the assigned contributor, a distributor's name, a distributor's reply email address, special instructions, a master workbook name, a master workbook date, a due back date, information regarding how the workbook will be distributed, distribution status, information regarding when and how a contributor returned a contribution, information regarding when a distributor collected contributions and information regarding when a distributor merged contributions.